11: Mead--161
116, 175

(No date) 1921

Jivaro

"The diminutive shrunken heads made by the Jivaro Indians, suggesting save for their long straight hair, the heads of Negro pygmies, have been familiar objects in museums for many years and many have been the queries as to how and why they are made. Just how they are made is a problem that has only recently been solved, though many, and oftentimes absurd, have been the speculations as to the way the Indians managed to shrink them to so small a size. One that for some time obtained widespread credence was, that in an early stage of the work the skin of the head was boiled. Of course, boiling would have caused it to fall to pieces. The heads are always black in color, and this was accounted for by the supposition that they had been smoked over a fire.

The details of the process did not come to us all at one time, but by driblets from travelers who had visited some part of the Jivaro country in eastern Ecuador. Indians guard such tribal secrets very jealously, and it is extremely difficult, and in most cases impossible, for one who remains but a short time in their country to obtain exact information about them."

11: Mead--161 [2] (No date) 1921 Jivaro
116, 727

"The head, with a small part of the neck, is severed from the body. A cut is made from the base of the skull down through the skin of the neck. Through the opening thus made the bones of the head are carefully removed, and the skin and remaining soft parts are dipped into the juice of the huito fruit, which stains them black.

The skin is now ready for the shrinking process, which varies somewhat in different localities. In some divisions of the Jivaro tribe a number of hot stones are put into the cavity, and the whole is constantly turned in order to bring them in contact with all parts of the inner surface. When one Indian tires, the head is passed to another. It is said that the process sometimes continues for a week or more before the head is reduced to the desired size.

In other localities a single stone, nearly the size of the head, is first used, then a smaller one, and so on until the work is completed. In still other localities hot sand takes the place of stones. Long, pendent cords usually fasten the lips together, and one is run through the top of the head to suspend it. The cut in the back of the neck is then sewed up, and the trophy is finished."

Ii: Mead--161[3] (No date) 1921 Jivaro
116, 437, 441

"The first heads that found their way out of the Jivaro country did so by being passed from hand to hand until they came into the possession of some trader who brought them down the Amazon to Para, where they were disposed of. Unfortunately the Jivaro soon learned that these heads were much in demand by white men and began to prepare them for the traders, being by no means particular as to whose head was used, and it is said that advance orders were frequently taken and filled. Certain it is that now and then short-haired heads bearing mustaches find their way into the market."

11: Mead--161 [4] (No date) 1921 Jivaro
116, 434

'In early times the Spaniards, and after them several South American countries, passed laws with severe penalties for any one known to have prepared one of the heads; but it was difficult for the law to reach the transgressors and not much seems to have been accomplished toward stopping the practice."